

# **TRADITIONAL INDIAN YOGA TEACHER TRAINING BY *ANIL MACHADO***

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INTRODUCTION

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**1.1 INTRODUCTION TO YOGA**

Yoga is way of life of an individual coordinated towards the objective of self-acknowledgement. It is strategy for immense control of incorporating brain, body and soul to accomplish a condition of illumination/self acknowledgement. Its an art of legitimate living and can be coordinated into our day by day life. It helps on all parts of an individual - physical, enthusiastic, scholarly and profound. Diverse parts of yoga offer distinctive methodologies, however the true objective is the equivalent; '**Profound Illumination**'.

Where there is system, there is science and where there is articulation of structure, magnificence and beauty, its a workmanship. Thusly, Yoga is science too a craftsmanship. It is likewise a technique or control to be trailed by the searchers of truth trying for supra-tactile and supra-savvy understanding. It has its very own techniques for physiological, mental and supra-mental prosperity of individual. A procedure pursued by most hopeful searchers of truth. So its a science. There is no workmanship without reasoning and Yoga is a live logic demonstrating the professional the correct kind of living with structure character drawn towards the hallowed place of heavenliness inside claim self and nature.

Methods of insight in India was constantly about a common-sense journey for A definitive and Yoga is the base of all the antiquated philosophies in India. Though the goal is one and the same method of attaining it may vary from system to system. There is not a single yoga, but multitude of Yogic paths, which into a great extent differ in content and practice, but the end goal is always the same.

Rigved, the first book of Vedic times asks us to meditate on the divine

***“Yunjate man ut yunjate dhiyo vipraa viprasya brihato vipashchitah” - Rigved  
5:81:1***

Yajurved exhorts us to practice yoga

***“Yoge Yoge Tavastaram vaaje vaaje havaamahe sakhaaya indra mootaye” -  
Yajurved 11:14***

Upanishad are replete with description and various aspects of Yoga, the essence of Upanishads is called Yoga-Shastra and the term Yoga occurs 105 times.

Two great systems rooted out from the Upanishads.

Firstly, attainment by Sanyasa

Secondly, Attainment by Yoga

Attainment by Sanyasa	Attainment by Yoga
Artificial means to suppress desire.	Scientific experiments to annihilate the consciousness of plurality.
Casting off oneself from home, possessions and family.	Consists in withdrawing the sense organs from the objects of sense and by concentrating them on the Atman.
	Shake oneself free from the illusions of Maya - The world of plurality and motion, secure union (Yog) with the inner self, the Atman - the world of unity (Yog) and rest (Samadhi)

According to Shiv Samhita, two doctrines are found in Vedas:-

Karma Kanda (sacrificial works)	Jnana Kanda (science and knowledge)
Karma Kanda is two fold, good and evil.  Having once realized the truth of Karma Kanda, the Yogi renounces the works of virtue and vice, and engages in Jnana Kanda - knowledge	Jnana Kanda is application of science to Karma Kanda, the works of good and evil, duality. The spirit of knowledge becomes the aim. Having renouncing all false desires and chains the Yogi and Sannyasi see certainly in their own spirit the Universal spirit. Having seen the spirit that brings forth happiness in their own spirit, they forget the universe, and enjoy the ineffable bliss of Samadhi.

The word Yoga is differently utilized in the early Vedic writings and later on throughout the hundreds of years more accentuation was given to the term as it developed into a more extensive sense and distinctive implications, in this manner shaping the doctrine to its very own solid logic. The term can't be restricted to the extent of religion, and can't be characterized inside the phrasing of a religion, however its a strategy for self-request and internal investigation. The idea of Yoga is regularly advancing and in last 5000 years numerous sacred writings have been composed and passed on to the cutting edge orally. Besides the Raja Yoga in the Atharva Veda, in the Upanishads, Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, Yoga Vasistha, The Buddhist Mahayanist Yoga of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, Vajrayana of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, Laya or Kundalini Yoga of the Tantras and the Agamas. However, the Shaivite form of Yoga has been traced to sources pre-Aryan, or at-least non-Aryan period. The doors of Yoga have been open to all classes. It had special attention and attraction among Shudras (the lower castes) and the new converts to Hinduism from Buddhist or non-Aryan classes. Most of the classical Yogis hailed from the lower strata of the society.

Yogic rationality talks about widespread facts that can be joined into any conviction framework. (for example Buddhism and Jainism have embraced a few lessons of Yoga into its framework) This is the best decent variety one can discover in yoga. The goal is the equivalent - revelation of the human potential and self acknowledgement. The antiquated Yoga educators believed Yoga to be a science, since its point isn't just to pick up information - not the outer learning of actualities, figures and scholarly adapting, yet the most profound, most adaptive

and the information we can have for our actual internal identity. While in the meantime improving our associations with the world. The abundance of Yoga reasoning can make us more grounded in all parts of our day to day lives and improve our way to deal with life.

According to the ancient Indian traditions and Yoga means unification, which is first the unity of all the dualities and contraries that constitute the energies of life. The philosophy of Yoga teaches us to understand and transcend duality, but this rests upon harmonizing the dualities within us in a transformative state of balance. It is understood that **Shiva & Shakti** are the dual cosmic principles and intrinsic part of Yoga, which constitutes a natural process of integration and transformation. Recognition of the cosmic duality leads us into the practice of Yoga, which is unification. All Yoga is development of Shiva (conscious awareness) and Shakti (energy/power), the state of the seer and its energy as seeing, drawing the dual forces from their lower manifestations in the realm of division to their higher reality in the pure 'Oneness'.

*"I am neither Hatha Yogi, nor an Ashtanga Yogi. I am only a practitioner of Yoga. It is not correct to demarcate Yoga into artificial divisions, such as Hatha Yoga or Ashtanga Yoga, except for theoretical purposes. Otherwise Yoga is one"*  
*- B.K.S. Iyengar*

I fully agree with the above words of Guru Iyengar, one of my Gurus. In classical Indian tradition, Yoga is simply Yoga and there is no demarcation in it. In spite of the advancements of science and knowledge of body and mind, diseases and unhappiness are on rise. Practice of Yoga, composed of physical, ethical, mental, intellectual and spiritual aspects, affects one to subjectively experience rather than to infer by mere observations. When one is free from physical disabilities and mental distractions, naturally one is led to gain knowledge and wisdom and to live in the kingdom of self or bliss.

The word Yoga is likewise appropriate in its auxiliary sense to the components of Yoga, viz., self-preparing, think about, the diverse activities and practices that go to make up Yoga as they are helpful for the satisfaction of Yoga and thusly in a roundabout way lead to liberation. Union with the Supreme Self is the objective of

human life and that should turn into the touchstone of every single human undertaking. That is the most important thing in the world of presence. Composure is Yoga. Peacefulness is Yoga. Ability in activities is Yoga. Control of the faculties and the brain is Yoga. Anything by which the best and the most elevated in life can be achieved is likewise Yoga. Yoga is in this way widely inclusive, comprehensive and widespread in its application prompting all-round improvement of body, brain and soul.

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## 1.2 FOUNDATION OF YOGA

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The word yoga alludes to various things in the present time. Some may comprehend as a postural exercise, some may comprehend as sitting and pondering, some may comprehend as reciting a few mantras or troublesome body stances. A yoga specialist may comprehend it as an elective framework to mend somebody. There are rare sorts of people who comprehend yoga as a religion from India. Customarily the idea of Yoga had its foundations in the Vedic individuals or individuals from Indus Valley civilization. Notwithstanding, it was the Buddhists and Jains who were vigorously impacted by the idea of Yoga and the fundamentals of Yoga structure and there is a solid establishment in Buddhism and Jainism. Diverse perspectives about yoga are sensible somewhat, however not completely evident. Yoga is an old method for living which will be additionally clarified in detail amid this course.

‘Yoga’ or **‘Yug’** is derived from the root word **‘yuj’**, meaning yoke, harness or connect together. Commonly, Yoga is understood as union. The union of the **jeevatma** (individual self) with the **paramatma** (The universal self).

In the **Yoga Sutras** (aphorisms) of Maharishi Patanjali, the term yoga is understood **yuj samadhan** (which means "to yoke," or **yuj samadhau**, which means "to concentrate."). Yoga Sutras also states that yoga means **‘Samadhi’** (Concentration leading to complete meditative absorption or spiritual absorption).

Yoga is a discipline (*Sadhana*) to attain that union. The purpose of Yoga is to attain spiritual perfection through the control of the body and mind.

Yoga as an applied science, is a systematic discipline to achieve the intended goal.

*Chitta-vritti-nirodha* refers to calming the mind through the meditative techniques of Patanjali yoga. By calming these mental fluctuations, the yogi opens him/herself to experience union with the Divine, the Higher Self or the Absolute Reality. Among these fluctuations of the mind are desires and attachments, which can be to worldly objects, ideas or even relationships.

The term comes from the Sanskrit, *chitta*, meaning “consciousness” or “mind-stuff”; *vritti*, meaning “fluctuations”; and *nirodha*, meaning “suppression” or “restraint.”

Our mind (*chitta*) is the source of material cause (*upadana karana*), the productive cause of all *tri-gunas*\*, (integral constituents of the mind) likewise *sattvaguna*, *rajoguna*, *tamoguna*.

*\* Guna-depending on the context means "string, thread, or strand", or "virtue, merit, excellence", or "quality, peculiarity, attribute, property"*

Hence the mind is called *Prakasha-kriya-sthitisheela* and the states of the *TriGunas* are respectively called brightness, action and static. *Sattvaguna* has brightness in its nature, *Rajaguna* action and *Tamoguna* is motionless.

*Citta*, the mind has five states-*Kshipta* (disturbed), *Mudha* (dull), *Vikshipta* (distracted), *Ekagra* (one-pointed), *Nirodhah* (mastered).

Yog begins in the concentrate state of *Citta*. All the moods, reflections and thoughts that arise in *Citta* are classified in five categories by Patanjali:

*Pramana* (right knowledge)

*Viparyaya* (indiscrimination)

*Vikalpa* (verbal delusion)

*Nidra* (sleep)

*Smirti* (memory)



The state of *yog* is impeding these thoughts and moods, irrespective of their conditions. In "*Yogh Samadhih*" the afflictions and the bondages of karma subside when they are impeded, the practitioner achieves a mental state called *Niruddha* (blackened).

Out of the many definitions of Yoga which are applying to various levels of existence and evolution of consciousness. The most popular definition is union. The union between the individual self and Divine Self. The aim of Yoga is to help us realize our identity with the Real/Universal Self, to make us know and tune into our intrinsic nature.

*Although The Yoga Sutras are very comprehensive texts, it does not Provide a detailed list of Asanas or pranayama or Dhyana. Many of The above are left to be learnt from a Guru or Acharya or an Enlightened preceptor.*

To be free from the miseries and sufferings of life is supposedly the ultimate goal of Yoga. In other words it is the self-realization, i.e., *mokska or kaivalya or nirvana*.

Yoga offers the objective of life and the way to achieve it. It offers a bigger number of advantages than anybody can request. The essential objective is to pick up equalization and control in one's life; to free oneself from disarray and pain; to give a feeling of calm that originates from the act of yogic asanas and pranayama. The asanas goes for defeating the restrictions of the body. At the point when the physical state isn't immaculate, it causes an unevenness in our psychological state. Asanas encourages us to defeat such unevenness.

The object of Yoga is to weaken what are called the five afflictions. The five afflictions are: Ignorance, Egoism, Likes, Dislikes and the instinct of self-

preservation (or clinging to bodily life). Ignorance is the fertile soil which bears an abundant crop of the rest. On account of ignorance only egoism has manifested. Wherever there is egoism, there invariably exist likes, dislikes and the rest side by side. Clinging to bodily life or fear of death is born of likes only. It is nothing but attachment.

Egoism is a specific form of ignorance. The mind gets itself attached wherever there is pleasure. If the mind likes pomegranate, it gets itself attached to this fruit, as it derives pleasure from eating it. The mind runs after things that have been associated with agreeable experiences in the past. This is attachment (like). The mind runs away from objects which have caused pain. This is dislike. These are all the faults of man himself. The world can never hurt you. The five elements are your best teachers. They help you in a variety of ways. The things created by the Lord are all beneficial. It is only the creation of man that brings pain and misery. These five afflictions bind you to the outside objects and reduce you to piteous slavery. These afflictions remain as tendencies even when they are inoperative. These afflictions and tendencies can be attenuated by Yogic discipline. On account of ignorance you have forgotten your primitive Divine Glory. On account of this evil you are not able to remember your old status of Godhood, your original immortal, blissful, divine nature. Ignorance is the root cause of egoism, likes, dislikes and the rest. These five afflictions are great impediments to Yoga. They stand as stumbling-blocks to the attainment of Self-realisation.

These five torments stay in a torpid, constricted, overwhelmed or completely created state. In a Yogic understudy these distresses become dispersed or lessened by the otherworldly power of Yogic practices. Yet, they do exist in an inconspicuous state. They can't do any ruin. They resemble the cobra whose noxious teeth have been separated by the snake-charmer. The "overwhelmed state" is that state in which one lot of impressions is held under restriction for quite a while by another incredible arrangement of impressions; yet they show once more, when the reason for the concealment is evacuated. In a common man with interests and hungers these can be seen working in fullest swing. Be that as it may, in a completely created or out and out Yogi these torments and impressions are singed in as well.

The Yogic student should first try to weaken these five afflictions. Three practices are prescribed for this purpose. They are: Austerity (**Tapas**), Study of Scriptures (**Svadhyaya**) and Resignation to the Will of the Lord (**Isvara-pranidhana**). The practitioner should have intense faith in the efficacy of his practices. Then the energy to carry on with the practices will manifest by itself. Then the real memory will dawn. When there is memory, then there is no difficulty in practising Concentration. If there is concentration, discrimination will dawn. That is the reason why Patanjali says: **"Samadhi will come through faith, energy, memory, concentration and discrimination."**

Therefore, to get success in concentration, meditation and the practice of Yoga, you must have tremendous patience, tremendous will and tremendous perseverance. Plunge yourself in concentration. Merge the mind in the one idea of God and God alone. Let the mind fully get absorbed there. Forget other things. Let the whole body, muscles, tissues, nerves, cells and brain be filled with the one idea of God. This is the way to positive success. Great sages and saints of yore have practised Yoga in this way only. Work hard. You will reach the goal. You will also become a great saint. Whatever one has achieved can be achieved by others also. This is the Law.

Yoga is rooted in virtue. Ethical discipline is very necessary for success in Yoga. Ethical discipline is the practice of right conduct in life. The two moral back-bones of Yoga are **Yama** and **Niyama**, which the aspirant must practice in his daily life. Non-injuring (**Ahimsa**), truthfulness (**Satyam**), non-stealing (**Asteya**), continence (**Brahmacharya**) and non-covetousness (**Aparigraha**) are the component parts of Yama. Internal and external purification (**Saucha**), contentment (**Santosha**), austerity (**Tapas**), study of religious and philosophical books (**Svadhyaya**) and self-surrender to the Lord (**Isvara-Pranidhana**) come under Niyama. Practice of Yama and Niyama will eradicate all the impurities of the mind. In fact, Yama and Niyama form the corner-stones of Yoga philosophy.

The list of six components (**Sadanga**) of Yoga, **pranayama, pratyahara, dhyana, dharana, tarka and samadhi** is first found in the Maitri Upanishad, is adopted and used variously in Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain contexts eventually becoming a key component of the Buddhist **GUHYASAMAJA TANTRA** (Tantra of the Secret Community) is one of the most important scriptures of Tantric Buddhism)

- *In Ayurved the formulation is also known as Yog, which indicates the perfect combination or union of desired ingredients.*
- *Sage Patanjali mentions the complete merger of individual consciousness with the supreme consciousness as Yog.*
- *Hatha Yoga finds its source from Tantra(Tanoti - expansion & Trayati - liberation), Hatha Yoga's final goal is expanding consciousness and liberation of creative energy (Prakriti/Shakti) and finally merging with inner consciousness (Purusha/Shiva).*
- *Buddhism and Jainism also use the term Yog to transform individuals.*

## **YOGA IN MAHABHARATA**

Mahabharata provides a valuable orientation of Yoga prior to the systematic tradition by Patanjali. In Mahabharata there is a wide variety of configuration with greater or lesser resemblance to the later classical system. In Mahabharata the yoga is proclivity for theism, in contrast to the non-theistic orientation of Sankhya of Patanjali.

Yoga and Yogins occur quite widely in the Mahabharata, It occurs over 300 times in the **Santiparvam** and 900 times in the Mahabharata in contexts which often suggest a broader and rather different understanding of the terms from that of classical Yoga. The practice of Tapas and discipline of Yoga are often linked. **Aranyakapavam Savnaka** urges **Yudhishthra** to pursue success by tapas and by Yoga.

Yoga practice presented in the Mahabharata, comprises four aspects of general preparations through moral conduct, diet, posture and surroundings, Breath control, withdrawal of senses (Pratyahara), concentration (Dharana) and meditation (Dhyana). Moral conduct, besides being indicated positively as in the list 'meditation', study, giving, truth, modesty, honesty, patience, purity, cleanliness of food and restraint of senses, also to avoid the five faults (dosas - as in Kleshas of Yoga Sutra) - lust, anger, greed, fear and sleep or passion, delusion, affection, lust, anger.

In the Dhyana Yoga chapter (12:188), **Bhishma** outlines to Yudhisthira the four-fold Yoga of Dhyana (***Dhyanayogam caturvidham***) where one should collect together all the senses, fix the mind on single point and sit like a log of wood and after passing through further stages of Dhyana (***vitarka, vicara and viveka***) and finally withdrawing the senses through concentration, one becomes completely tranquil and gains nirvana (Dhyana Yoga is seen as the climax of the path of spiritual ascent)

***The clearest theistic emphasis is found in the Bhagavad Gita. The yogic techniques of isolating the self. It defines Samkhyayoga a kind of yoga apart from Karma Yoga & Dhyana Yoga. Krishna declares that it is possible to recognize the eternal atman through the practice of Yoga by learning to detach oneself completely from the results of actions, by abandoning desires such a person reaches peace and the stillness of Brahman (2.71 - 72)***

The common most use of the term 'Yoga' in the narrative sections of the Mahabharata is to refer to a dying warrior transferring himself at death to the sphere of the sun through yoga, a practice that links up with the Upanishadic references to the channel to the crown of the head as the pathway by which one can travel through the solar orb to the world of 'Brahman'.

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### **1.3 DEVELOPMENT OF YOGA**

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The origin of word Yoga can be traced to the Vedas\* and Upanishads.

*\*Vedas - A large body of spiritual texts/literature in ancient India composed in Sanskrit language. Its believed to be revelations of great sages dating back to 1700-1100 BCE. Upanishads are part of Vedas. (Veda-Knowledge or wisdom)*

The root of yoga lies covered up in the fogs of ancient times. It was gradually advanced and created by the antiquated sages, in ancient Indus valley as well as everywhere throughout the world. It has, be that as it may, been adjusted to suit local dialects, social thoughts and other social impacts. The embodiment of yoga was enveloped with or clarified in various images, analogies and dialects. A few

customs trust that yoga was an awesome blessing uncovered to the old sages with the goal that mankind could have the chance to understand its heavenly nature. By and large the strategies of yoga were passed on from educator or master to their followers by oral conversations. Thusly there was a reasonable comprehension of the significance of the systems and points of yoga as the master, through his own involvement, guided the understudies along the correct way and far from any perplexity and misconception. It was just when the different frameworks of yoga were recorded that individuals started to see logical inconsistencies in the lessons. These disparities were just shallow, nonetheless, and emerged through error.

The writers of the traditional writings can't be accused, for they recorded their thoughts on yoga as plainly as conceivable so as to evade error. They clarified their thoughts with the base measure of words so individuals would not lose themselves by attempting to intellectualize about word implications, or in different cases they dressed their works in imagery and analogies. This was done as such that just an individual arranged and prepared for an educating would almost certainly comprehend the imagery, if vital with the assistance of a master.

Despite the fact that these precautionary measures were taken, numerous mistaken assumptions emerged, for the most part among excessively verbose and scholarly researchers who did not have the individual experience to help their critiques. Sadly individuals have tuned in to the observers without turning to the first messages and the exhortation of individuals more in contact with the soul of yoga. The outcome has been disarray, and as a result some well-expectation of individuals have played out the most peculiar acts for the sake of yoga. Some frequently cited precedents are strolling ablaze, sitting in the late morning sun and tormenting the body in an assortment of ways, for example, remaining on one leg in one spot for a considerable length of time.

As far as the ancient texts are concerned it would be difficult to find an exact date because historians generally differ. However, the teachings may date back even earlier than their compilations into texts. In India its believed that the practice of Yoga originated at the dawn of civilization. In the Yogic lore, Shiva is seen as the first Yogi or *Adiyogi* and is the first Guru or *Adiguru*.

A number of seals, statues discovered from the time of Indus valley civilization depict the positions of yoga. Therefore, it could also be possible that Yoga was practised in ancient India even before 5000 years or the pre-Vedic era. Some scholars have found evidence of early yogic practice in the archaeological artefacts from the Indus Valley civilization, which developed from about 2500BCE. Sir John Marshall, director general of the Archaeological Survey of India, began excavating two sites, *Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa*, in 1921 and discovered the remains of a highly developed urban culture. Among the artefacts unearthed was the *"Pasupati Seal,"* so-called because Marshall believed that the horned figure surrounded by animals which it depicts was a prototype of Siva, the "Lord of the Beasts" (pasupati), seated in a yoga posture. Textual evidence of yoga practice begins to emerge only at a much later stage. While there are references to tapas -practising ascetics (*called muni, kesin, or vratyā*) as early as the vedic Brahmanas. The seers of Vedic India practised tapas because it generated intense bodily heat (*tapam*) by transforming the physical and psychosexual energies in the body into spiritual (tejas), which gave them ability to manifest things, control nature and alter reality. The first occurrence of the word "yoga" itself is in the Kāṭha Upanishad (approximately third century BCE), where it is revealed to the boy Naciketas by Yama, god of death, as a means to leave behind joy and sorrow and overcome death itself (2.12 ff). The Svetasvatara Upanishad (approximately third century BCE) outlines a procedure in which the body is maintained in an upright posture while the mind is brought under control by the restraint of the breath (2.8-14). The much later Maitri Upanishad describes a six-fold yoga method of yoga, namely (1) breath control (pranayama), (2) withdrawal of the senses (pratyahara), (3) meditation (dhyana), (4) placing of the concentrated mind (dharana), (5) philosophical inquiry (tarka), and (6) absorption (samadhi). These technical terms will later (with the exception of tarka) be used to designate five of the eight elements of Patatanjali's Ashtanga Yoga. The section of the Mahabharata known as the Bhagavad Gita lays out three paths of yoga by which the aspirant can know the Lord, or supreme person, here known as Krishna. The first is the path of action (*karmayoga*), in which one gives up the fruits of one's actions but continues to be an agent in the world, guided by Krishna himself. The second is the path of devotion (*bhaktiyoga*), in which one's devotion to Krishna swiftly liberates one from worldly suffering, regardless of caste. 3 The third is the path of knowledge (*jnanayoga*) which liberates through discrimination of the true nature of self and universe. The Bhagavad Gita also

describes a range of practices undertaken by yogins of the day (such as an internalization of the vedic ritual, as in the sacrifice of the inhalation (*prana*) into the exhalation (*apana*) (26 [4]: 22-31), as well as instructions for the preparation of a yoga sadhana and for the withdrawal of the senses (28 [6]: 1-29). The Yoga Sutras (YS, c. 250 CE ?) ascribed to Patanjali consist of 195 brief aphorisms (sutrani) outlining diverse methods for the attainment of yoga. It is heavily influenced by Samkhya philosophy, but also contains distinct elements from Buddhism and a variety of sramana (renunciant ascetic) traditions. The *Yogasutra abhasya* attributed to Vyasa (c. 500-600 CE ), is the first and most influential commentary on the text and is sometimes even regarded as a component part of the Yoga Sutra itself. Although the text has received an enormous amount of interest from modern scholars, even coming to be known as the “Classical Yoga,” bear in mind that it is one among many texts on yoga and may not necessarily be the authoritative source for Indian yoga traditions, as is commonly supposed. It has become the primary text for anglophone yoga practitioners in the twentieth century, largely due to the influence of European scholarship, on the one hand, and early promoters of practical yoga, like Vivekananda and H. P. Blavatsky, on the other. However, it is common for modern yoga teachers to confine their discussion of the text to the Ashtanga Yoga.

The history of Yoga is generally divided into four broad periods:-

1. The Vedic age/period
2. Pre-classical Yoga period
3. Classical Yoga period.
4. Post-classical Yoga period.

**The Vedic period (3000BCE to 800BCE)-** In the Vedic period the Vedas contain the oldest known Yogic teachings, but indirectly without elaborating much on the term Yoga, which is also called Vedic Yoga. In this period people followed the Rishis (sages) and life was lived in divine harmony. These Rishis realized the ultimate truth through their intense spiritual and meditative practices (Shruti - Deep Dhyana to Samadhi). This period marked the emergence of the Vedas (knowledge)

The literature during this period is called the Vedas that set the tone for Hinduism of today. The Vedas were a compilation of worship songs that recognize an almighty power and encompass the most ancient teachings of Vedic



people. The lessons taught from the Vedas are recognized after some centuries as Vedic Yoga. In Vedic period, customs and functions that allow the mind to broaden are the most important aspect of all the teachings. The Vedic people welcomed Rishis to instruct them on how to live to meet the standards of divinity and togetherness that the Vedas set forth. Rishis also had the power to view the paramount actuality by means of spiritual customs. Rishis felt that they could best express themselves by living in a quiet, secluded place but close to nature so they established their domiciles in forests.



*Mohenjodaro - The Ancient Indus Valley civilization approximately 5500BCE. The Pashupati seal (proto shiva archetype interpretations to vedic deities Rudra, Agni, Mahisha, Varuna, Yogi)*

Upanishads are part of Vedas and central philosophical concepts of early vedic people. Upanishads have also influenced the teachings of Buddhism and Jainism. In the Vedanta Philosophy, the Yoga Upanishads (1100 to 300BC) deals with the theory and the practice of Yoga, the emphasis is on the methodology and dhyana(meditation).

References to yoga and techniques of Yoga are found in several Upanishads. Some Shaiva and Vaishnava Upanishads which are exclusively devoted to the theory and practice of yoga are known as yoga Upanishads. However, since they are later day works, compiled probably from pre-existing works, from a historical perspective they are not of much value, except for comparative study and technical details. Among the earliest Upanishads references to yoga are found in the Katha, Svetasvatara, and Maitri Upanishads. In them we can discern a gradual unfolding of the techniques and practices of yoga.

**Pre-classical Yoga period (800BCE to 250BCE)-** In the Pre-classical Yogic period, the Upanishads expound the teachings of Vedas and we see the

transformation of Vedas in the Upanishads and the idea of ritual sacrifice from the earlier part of the Vedas was transformed into the idea of sacrifice of ego through self-knowledge, action (Karma Yoga) and wisdom (Jnana Yoga) emerge. During this time certain aspects of Yoga were incorporated into Buddhism and Jainism and especially "Dhyana". The Upanishads are also called as Vedanta because they formed the end part of the Vedas and also because they are said to contain the end or aim or essence of Yoga. These expound upon three subjects: Jiva (embodied soul), Jagat (the world) and Ishvara (God or the creator of the universe). The climax of the enquiry is the experience of the essential identity of the individual soul (*atman*) inside with ultimate reality (*Brahman*) outside.

The principles of yoga started to gain influence over most of the Eastern philosophies, most notably Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism. Buddhism began in the 6th century BCE. when Buddha began his teachings which include engaging in specific techniques of Dhyana (meditation). Around approximately 500 BCE, the oldest discovered sacred scripture was composed and named Bhagavad Gita, which translates to Lord's Song. Bhagavad-Gita spoke of yoga and revealed that it had in fact been around for quite some time before the scripture was written, yet does not give a date that indicates when yoga began. The main focus of the Gita is to emphasize that living functioning and accomplishing things, but to stray from hardships people must put their egos aside and let their actions speak for who they are.

Similar to how the Upanishads gave more insight to the teachings of the Vedas, the Gita integrated the teachings of the Upanishads. Found in the Gita are three aspects that allow one to lead the greatest life. These principles are Karma (generous actions), Bhakti (caring dedication), and Jnana (knowledge). The Gita attempted to bring together the three ideals that formed separate yogas which were Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, and Jnana Yoga which made the practice more important. The Gita was a communication even between God-man Krishna and Prince Arjuna that was about goodness and the opposition of anything evil.

**Yoga Vasistha** - is one the greatest spiritual classics as detailed conversation between Sri Rama and his spiritual Guru Vasistha Maharishi. The text goes into great detail surrounding the subtle intricacies of the mind, unravelling the

multitude of layers to our very existence along the way. Much of the text is told through parable stories, which hold many hidden depths within them. The ongoing theme throughout the texts revolves around the notion of worldly miseries being caused by our own illusions of the world and whatever we perceive on the outside is merely a reflection of how we feel inside. Moving beyond these temporary illusions is the path to true enlightenment and Vasistha Maharishi goes into great depths as to how such a journey can be undertaken. The term Yoga in the text refers to the underlying Yogic theme in its stories and dialogues, and the term is used in a generic sense to include all forms of yoga in the pursuit of liberation, in the style of Bhagavad Gita.

The eight limbs of Dhyana (meditation) according to Yoga Vasistha:

- 1). Yama (the five abstentions) = non-violence, non-lying, non-covetousness, non-sensuality, and non-possessiveness.
- 2). Niyama (the five observances) = purity, contentment, austerity, study and surrender to Ishvara (Supreme being).
- 3). Asan = literally means 'seat', and Patanjali in Yoga Sutra also refers to the seated position used for Dhyana.
- 4). Pranayama (suspending breath) = Prana, breath, 'ayama', to restrain or stop. Also interpreted as control of the life force.
- 5). Pratyahara (abstraction) = withdrawal of the sense organs from external objects.
- 6). Dharana (concentration) = Fixing attention on a single object.
- 7). Dhyana (closely to the English word Meditation) = Intense contemplation of the nature of the object for Dhyana.
- 8). Samadhi (Liberation) = merging consciousness with the object of Dhyana.

**Yoga Yajnavalkya** (between 2<sup>nd</sup> BCE & 4<sup>th</sup> BCE) - Yoga Upanishads and Hatha Yoga texts contain verses from Yoga Yajnavalkya. It also contains one of the most important and comprehensive discussion of Yoga such as Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana and Dhyana. The texts were influenced in development of Yoga practice of India before the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

Yoga Yajnavalkya mentions two paths to attain knowledge.

<b>Pravritti-Karma</b>	Driven by desire and craving for rewards, forms his will and using knowledge to act out free will.
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<b>Nivritti-Karma</b>	Not driven by desire and craving for rewards but using knowledge in works in a detached manner (causing liberation and ending suffering and rebirth)
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- Mentions 10 yamas 1). **Ahimsa** (non-violence by action, word and thought), 2). **Satya** (truthfulness), 3). **Asteya** (not stealing), 4). **Brahmacharya** (celibacy or fidelity), 5). **Daya** (compassion), 6). **Arjava** (sincerity), 7). **Kshama** (forgiveness), 8). **Dhrti** (fortitude), 9). **Mitahara** (moderation in diet) and 10). **Sauca** (purity & cleanliness).

- Mentions 10 Niyamas 1). **Tapas** (austerity), 2). **Santosha** (contentment), 3). **Astika** (faith in merit and demerit), 4). **Dana** (charity, generosity), 5). **Ishvarapujana** (worship of Ishvara - supreme being, true self), 6). **Siddhanta sravana** (listening to Vedas and Upanishads), 7). **Hri** (modesty), 8). **Mati** (faith in self and duties), 9). **Japa** (repetition of mantras) and 10). **Vratam** (vows to achieve Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha).

Chapter three mentions asanas - eight body postures with brief description.

Asanas are two types, meditative and cleansing the body, important in the journey of Yoga. (**Swastikasana, Gomukhasana, Padmasana, Virasana, Simhasana, Bhadrasana, Muktasana & Mayurasana**).

The fourth chapter mentions the human body and flow of the prana for its function, the inner fire within the body which is equal to prana, explanation of the Nadi's.

The fifth and sixth chapters mention cleansing of body and mind, location for yogic practices, mastering the breath and the use of mantras while mastering the breath.

The seventh chapter discusses Pratyahara and its five forms practice of Dharana with chanting the bijamantra.

The eighth chapter elaborates the theory of Marma points and importance of Marma in the initial stages of dhyana.

The ninth chapter discusses Dhyana, suggests variations of Saguna dhyana.

The tenth chapter mentions of Samadhi (as concentration here) wherein one fixes mind during samadhi on the supreme self.

The eleventh chapter mentions that anyone can reach state of Samadhi irrespective of Vedic duties, but should do Dharmic duties. All duties must be performed until the end of one's life.

The twelfth chapter mentions Siddha yoga and Kundalini. The awakening of Kundalini is done through meditating on breathing exercises.

Yoga Yagnavalkya was most significant in practice then the Patanjali's Yogasutra before the 12<sup>th</sup> century, It dominated the Indian Yoga scene. It has additional material not found in the Yogasutras, such as the concept of Kundalini.

**Classical Yoga period (184BCE to 148BCE)** - During this period the first systematic presentation of Yoga was done by Patanjali through the Yoga Sutras. (Between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE ).

Patanjali classified Yoga into eight-limbed path towards obtaining Samadhi (Enlightenment). Its also referred as classical or traditional Yoga.

*Yama* (social restraints/observances or ethical values)

*Niyama* (personal observances/restraints of study, purity and tolerance)

*Asanas* (physical postures)

*Pranayama* (control of life force through breath control or regulation)

*Pratyahara* (withdrawal of sense organs from their respective objects for meditation)

*Dharana* (concentration)

*Dhyana* (Meditation (please note, although I use the word meditation here the word meditation does not fully translate to dhyana, but it is the closest English word that we can understand. Dhyana is something more than meditation)

*Samadhi* (spiritual absorption)

The first five limbs of this system are termed "external" because they address relationships with the world and with the body, breath, and senses.

The "internal," or "mental," rungs of yoga, the last three of the eight limbs, comprise three increasingly refined stages of concentration

**Post-classical period** - It refers to the period after the classical period till the present time. During this period several books and literature on Yoga was written by many sages, gurus and yogis. During this period the physical body and its upkeep started gaining significance because the body was considered vehicle for the soul to attain enlightenment. Tantra Yoga came into the picture. Tantra yogis

started to revamp the ancient yogic practices. The word “tantra” literally means a technique or a technology. This is an inner technology. These are subjective methods not objective methods. But in the current understanding in society, the word "tantra" refers to very unorthodox or socially unacceptable methods or sexually degenerated practices. It is just that certain aspects are used in a certain way. It is not any different from yoga. It is a limb of yoga called tantra yoga. It emphasized upon the cleansing practices for strengthening the psycho-physiological structure of human being so that it became fit to reach higher states of consciousness. From Tantra Yoga and its physical-oriented practices emerged what today we call as Hatha Yoga. Especially in the last century Yoga has re-invented itself and tries to harmonize the spiritual with the empirical. Many Gurukuls or disciples from Gurukuls travelled to west to spread the lifestyle of Yoga.

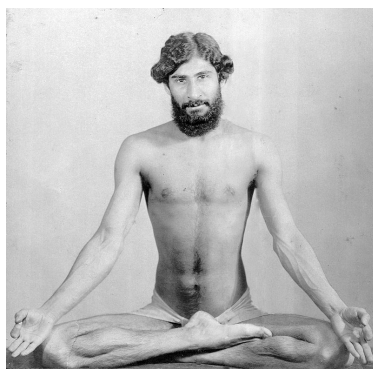
In the modern period, yoga and its teachings travelled from East to West, a phenomenon embodied first by the arrival of **Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902)** at the ‘First Parliament of the Worlds Religions held in Chicago in 1893. Drawing on the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita, he wrote on each of the four paths found there: raja yoga (meditation), karma yoga (selfless action), bhakti yoga (devotion), and jnana yoga (metaphysics). With his translations of Yogic texts from Sanskrit to English, he laid the groundwork for Yoga in the west, thus created a lasting impression and generating academic curiosity by his Yogic philosophy of Raja Yoga.



**In the early twentieth century, Swami Kuvalayananda (1883-1966)** of the Kaivalyadhama Health and Yoga Research Center , is well known as a researcher and educator for his research into the scientific foundations of Yoga. He sought scientific explanations for the various psychophysical effects of Yoga he experienced. In 1920-21, he investigated the effects of some of the Yogic practices on the human body with the help of some of his students in a laboratory at Baroda Hospital. His subjective experience, coupled with the results of these scientific experiments, convinced him that the ancient system of Yoga, if understood through the modern scientific experimental system, could help society. The idea of discovering the scientific basis behind these yogic processes became his life's work



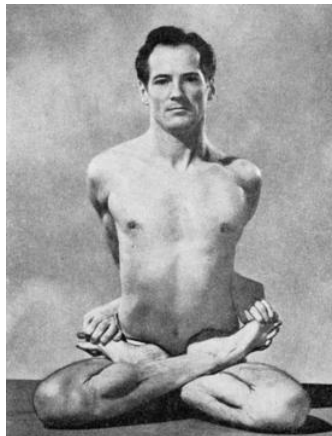
**Shri Yogendraji (1897 - 1989)** of the Yoga Institute in Mumbai, initiated systematic practice and research in yoga and one of the most important figures in the revival of Hatha Yoga practice in India as well as in the United States. He founded 'The Yoga Institute' the oldest organized Yoga school in the world. He is often referred to as the father of modern Yoga renaissance.



**Swami Prabhupada (1896-1977)** introduced Bhakti Yoga, the spiritual practice of Yoga traditions in the west. He founded Hare Krishna Movement in NY, USA in 1965.

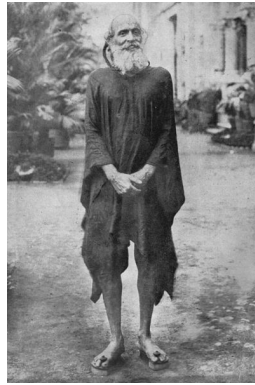
**Paramhansa Yogananda (1893-1952)** addressed a conference of religious liberals in Boston in 1920. He was instrumental in the spread of Kriya Yoga.

**Theos Bernard (1908-1947)** upon his return to United States from India and Tibet he published 'Hatha Yoga: The report of personal experience' in 1974. His work is still considered the best source of 20<sup>th</sup> century Yoga book.



**Paramahansa Madhavdasji (1798 – 1921)** was a true yoga master from Mukhopadhyaya family in Bengal. He was a major advocate responsible for the resurgence of yogic practices, which had almost vanished from most parts of India. His holiness - Madhavdasji's childhood inspired in him a strong devotional faith towards yoga. At the tender age of 23, he left home in pursuits of studying different Hatha yoga techniques and health benefits of Yoga practices, for the promulgation of spiritual health and development of the consciousness. It is said that he travelled around India on foot and learnt everything he could about yoga. For more than 50 years practised yoga techniques in the Himalayas and at the age of 80, he settled on the banks of Narmada River, Gujarat. He was a major influence on Shri Yogendra and Swami Kuvalayanada.





Since then, various traditions have spread worldwide. These include teachings set in

motion by T. Krishnamacharya (who inspired well-known practitioners of yoga such as B. K. S. Iyengar, T. K. V. Desikachar, Pattabhi Jois and Indira Devi); Swami Shivananda Sarasvati (and his disciples Swami Satyananda, Swami Vishnudevananda, and Swami Satchitananda); the Himalayan tradition (Swami Rama, Pandit Tigunait, and Swami Veda Bharati); the Kundalini Yoga (Yogi Bhajan); the Self-Realization Fellowship (Swami Yogananda); and the Rishiculture of Swami Gitananda Giri (Yogacharini Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani). Yoga practitioners and scientists such as H. R. Nagendra and R. Nagarathna of S-VYASA (Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana) University in Bangalore continued the early efforts of Swami Kuvalayananda with a special emphasis on yoga as therapy.

*(The Yoga tradition that evolved through the patronage and participation of the Wodeyar Royal family, Rajas of the kingdom of Mysore, has today supplanted a majority of yoga teachings traditions through teachings of B.K.S.Iyengar - The student of T. Krishnamacharya)*

It is well known that the works of Bombay based gurus Shri Yogendraji, Swami Kuvalayanada, alongwith the teachings of T.Krishnamacharya and his now famous Mysore disciples, were instrumental in bringing the postural yogic asanas into the public eye.

The Wodeyar Royal family, rajas of Mysore kingdom supported and funded the practice of postural yoga of T. Krishnamacharya. His famous four students were B.K.S.Iyengar, T.K.V.Desikachar, Pattabhi Jois and Indira Devi (The first westerner to be his student and to bring his lineage to the west). They have created a worldwide impact and their postural yoga or mix of Hatha & Ashtanga styles have influenced the modern practice of yoga.

B.K.S. Iyengar has influenced nearly every westerner by his anatomical precision yoga, whereas, Pattabhi Jois opened up the Ashtanga-Vinyasa Yoga to the west, T.K.V. Desikachar brought his Viniyoga to the west and Indira Devi was influential to teach the Yoga to the celebrities.

However, the person who introduced more Americans to Yoga than any other in those days was Richard Hittleman, who in 1950 returned from studies in India to teach yoga in the United States. Although he was the student of Ramana Maharishi, he presented postural yoga hoping students would then be motivated to learn the philosophy of Yoga.

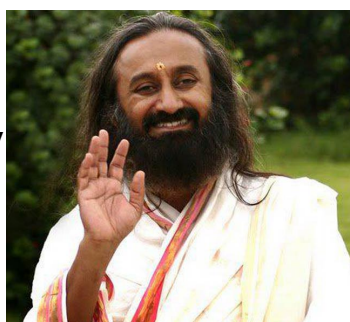
There have also been other influencers of Yoga in the west after 1950's such as, the Baptiste family, Swami Vishnu-Devananda, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (Transcendental Meditation), Amrit Desai (Kripalu), Swami Rama, Swami Satchidananda (Swami Sivananda's student), Ram Dass etc.,

**Currently the three most impactful Yoga Gurus in India and worldwide:-**

Since 2002, **Swami Ramdev** has popularized yoga throughout India as well as initiating research to study its effectiveness in health care. Swami Ramdev or often referred to as Baba Ramdev has nearly 10000 people participating in his daily early morning Yoga practices. He also has Yoga schools throughout India, besides his Ayurvedic consumer chain, Patanjali Ayurved has taken by storm in the Indian market.



Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, founder of 'The Art of Living' has also been instrumental in the modern revival of spiritual as well as the meditative side of Yoga. The art of living has a worldwide presence and very



much active in teaching the real essence of Yoga spiritually and physically. He is also focussed on spreading the ayurvedic brand under the name Tattva.

**Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev** a well known mystic in India has also influenced millions of people in India and worldwide by a Yogic moral way of rightful living. His Isha foundation is involved in many charity works and feeds almost thousands of people daily. Millions of people gain knowledge and guide to proper living and balance mental health by his seminars, talk shows and Yoga sessions.



These three Gurus in India are nearly household names and supported by the Indian government for the cause and spread of Yoga.

Notably, while yoga teachings have been derived from many written sources, it is the presence of a living lineage of teachers (a ***guruparampara***) that provides assurance that a particular teaching is genuine.

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#### **1.4 FACTORS FACILITATING PROGRESS IN YOGA**

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Overall a large number of careful individuals, are truly intrigued by the logic of Yoga. This instinctual person who has started to address life and its more profound issues needs something increasingly positive and fitting for the otherworldly needs than a plain guarantee of delights existence in the wake of

death or interminable life. The individuals who have lost confidence in the goals of doctrinal creed's but profound inside feel that their life isn't a random data or just a passing Catch 22 of universe, normally swing to the logic of Yoga for the illustration of issues associated with their otherworldly life.

Understudies who take up the act of Yoga with the point of looking for an all the more satisfying arrangement of these snags are probably going to meet with one noteworthy difficulty. They may discover the theory engaging, yet supererogatory inundated in a conundrum and gibberish to be of much realistic incentive in their life.

Maybe there is no study which is such a great amount of covered in a problem and on which one can create whatever to extravagant, with no obligation of being checked mistaken. Partially this character of puzzle and lack of clarity which encompasses Yoga is because of the very structure of the investigation itself. The standards of Yoga manages a portion of the tremendous secrets of life and the universe thus it should unmistakably be related with an impression of significant riddle.

Be that as it may, a significant part of the equivocalness of Yogic writing is expected, not to the intrinsic advancement of the subject but rather to the absence of connection between its lessons and the certainties with which a general individual is required to be familiar with.

On the off chance that the theory of Yoga are contemplated in the feeling of both old and present day thought it is uncomplicated for the wannabe to comprehend and retain them. The revelations made in the field of science are particularly useful in empowering the understudy to comprehend certain actualities of Yogic life, for there is a sure likeness between the laws of higher life and life as it exists on the physical plane.

Most teachers of Yoga have endeavoured to meet this trouble by taking out from the logic of Yoga those specific practices which are straightforward and work on, setting these before the world as Yogic lessons and are of an absolutely physical nature and when removed itself from the basic lessons of Yoga. They have diminished their frameworks to an action of physical wellness pattern on a standard with different frameworks of a comparative sort. This over improvement

of the of Yogic life, however it has benefited a few and helped a few people to carry on a saner and more beneficial genuine life, has enormously vulgarized the development for Yogic culture and delivered a wrong impression, particularly with some parts of population, about the genuine reason and strategy of Yoga.

While Patanjali speaks of *Sraddha* - faith, *virya* - courage, *smriti* - memory, *samadhi* - deep penetration and *prajna* - uninterrupted awareness as basic requirements (Y.S. 1.20)

But in a normal Yoga session or a class this is largely ignored teaching.

Svatmarama in the Hatha Yoga Pradipika mentions *utsaha* - zeal, *sahasa* - venture or enterprise, *dhairya* - courage , *tattva jnana* - self knowledge and *janasanga parityaga* - to remain away from bad people.

With progress in Yoga, the senses are refined, the intellect becomes firm and the fineness develops. Fundamentally what is required is tenacity of purpose, 'relentless practice' and complete faith in what one does.

The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali talk about three types of Yoga aspirants:

1. *Uttama Adhikari* - first class aspirant at Yoga
2. *Madhyam adhikari* - students who have been in Yoga for sometime but have not yet become an adepts.
3. *Adhama Adhikari* - novices or fresh initiates into Yoga.

As a student of Yoga one will need the resoluteness, balanced emotions and sharp psyche in order to develop for the effective progress in Yoga. There are many important classical texts on yoga to guide the practitioners. Hatha Pradipika is one of the best texts on practical aspects of Yoga to facilitate one's progress. Keep in mind these six factors and this will enable on you on your spiritual progress on the path of Yoga:

1). Ardent: The enthusiasm developed through sharpness is one of the highly motivating factors. The possession of ardent eagerness brings great success even though there is a series of failures in the path.

2). Perseverance : The firm conviction of persistence which is capable of utilizing the aptitude of the physical and mental capacities of an individual to bring about the higher degree of performance using the wisdom and power of action.

3). Fortitude: The strength of mind is another means in the successful mastery on the path of Yoga. The spirit of courage takes the great leap in the progress with adventurous nature. It allows growing up with full potential.

4). Insight: It is the ability to establish the impenetrability of the wisdom in the factors filled with the truth which also called as Shraddha. This principle is of great help in order to accomplish the certainty and clear-cut plan of action in the proper approach.

5). Determination : The practice of determination in the resolution develops the strong will power which nurtures our power of endurance and commitment to the task again and again.

6). Abandoning the company of bad people: Mixing too much with the common people/bad company will be a great obstacle. Self-study and practice requires the great amount of solitude in the yoga sadhana, this particular principle is of great help in the fulfilment of this objective

With the persuasive pertinence of these principles, one can develop an excellent practice and transcend in the path of Yoga.

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## 1.5 ISHWARA

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### ***ISHWARA IS NOT A DEITY OR DEVTA***

Ishwara: In the Upanishads, the word Ishwara is used to denote a state of collective consciousness. Thus, God is not a being that sits on a high pedestal beyond the sun, moon, and stars; God is actually the state of Ultimate Reality. But due to the lack of direct experience, God has been personified and given various names and forms by religions throughout the ages. When one expands one's individual consciousness to the Universal Consciousness, it is called Self-realization, for the individual self has realized the unity of diversity, the very underlying principle, or Universal Self, beneath all forms and names. The great sages of the Upanishads avoid the confusions related to conceptions of God and encourage students to be honest and sincere in their quests for Self-realization. Upanishadic philosophy provides various methods for unfolding higher levels of truth and helps students to be able to unravel the mysteries of the individual and

the universe. On the other hand the Hindu scriptures, such as vedas speak of many individual deities, called devas. Ishwara is just the name used to refer to the personal God in general, when no particular deity is being referred to. By 'God' we imply Ishwara or the Supreme Entity and not '*Devata*'. 'Devata' is a different term but often wrongly considered to mean 'Supreme Entity'. While Ishwara is also a 'Devata', any entity - living or non-living - that helps us or is useful for us is termed 'Devata'. But that does not mean every entity is Ishwara and should be worshipped. Vedas clearly specify that there is One and only One Ishwar. And there is no mantra in Vedas that can be interpreted to imply multiple Ishwara's

*The Supreme One who represents selflessness, controls the entire universe, is present everywhere and is the Devata of all Devatas, alone is source of bliss. Those who do not understand Him remain drenched in sorrow and those who realize Him achieve unconditional happiness. (Rigveda 1.164.39)*

*That creative source (ishvara) is a particular consciousness (purusha) that is unaffected by colorings (kleshas), actions (karmas), or results of those actions that happen when latent impressions stir and cause those actions.  
(klesha karma vipaka ashayaih aparamristah purusha-vishesha ishvara  
- Yoga Sutras 1.24*

## 1.6 GURU (MASTER/TEACHER)

The word Guru can be broken down into Gu meaning "darkness". Ru meaning "to destroy"

*'Gu' means 'darkness'; 'ru' means 'light'*

*Guru is the one who removes darkness of ignorance through the light of knowledge. Guru is a Sanskrit term that connotes someone who is a "teacher, guide or master" of certain knowledge. In Indian traditions, a guru is someone more than a teacher, traditionally a reverential figure to the student. A guru serves as a counsellor who helps shape values, imparts knowledge, sets example in life, a source of inspiration, and who helps in the unfolding of spirituality of a student. The term also refers to a mentor.*

Guru simply means a knowledgeable or enlightened person who dispels the darkness of ignorance and lift the veil of **Maya** (Illusion), thus rendering the disciple true knowledge and humbleness. Guru's have gained dominance over their senses, mind and body and often some Guru's are referred as **"Mahajnanis"** (supremely enlightened). A Guru is known to have qualities such as **Vinamrata** (humility), **Karuna** (compassion), **Nishkamabhaav** (selflessness), **Tyaag** (self-sacrifice), **Bhakti** (devotion) and **Dharma** (righteous conduct). Transferring of knowledge from Guru to Shishya (student/disciple) was traditionally a root of Yogic system over the centuries. A student/seeker/disciple of Yoga would generally journey to seek a real guru and would live at a Gurukul/Ashram to learn the teachings and practice of Yoga. Basically a Gurukul is a home of a Guru. Usually a student would live at a Gurukul for many months or years to seek the knowledge of Yoga. However, admissions into a Gurukul were not that simple and more powerful/enlightened a Guru was, the more difficult it was for an aspirant to find shelter under his wings. The Guru's made their Shishya's (disciples) undergo rigorous **tapas** (austerities) to prepare their bodies to withstand the hardships of life and instil good habits, love for hard work and selfless service.

The beginning of **Guru-Shishya parampara** (Master-disciple tradition) was depicted in Mundakoupanishad. The word Yog or **Yogvidya** (studies of Yoga) is mentioned to passed on by Brahma to his son Atharva.

The fact is that you have subscribed to this program and decided to become a Yoga Teacher, each one of you will be someday in future conducting Yoga classes or teaching the philosophy of Yoga to aspiring students. Therefore, you are on a path way of self-discovery and potential self-realized persons; a potential Guru.

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## 1.7 QUALITIES OF MENTAL & SPIRITUAL HEALTH

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All aspects of our human personality are cultured through the process of Yoga helping us evolve towards perfection until we are "One" with the Divine Self. In Yoga, equal importance is given to physical health as well as mental health and spiritual health. A mentally healthy person is considered to be **stitha prajna** (stabilized consciousness). Yoga helps destroy the **Kleshas**, the psychological afflictions that warp our vision, as well as eradicates Karma Bandha that prevents



us from realizing our potential Divinity. Our great Rishis like Veda Vyasa and Maharishi Patanjali have given us a clear guidelines for this evolutionary journey with vital clues towards understanding both the internal and external culturing processes of Yoga. The cultural teachings of Yoga help us become “All One” by losing our sense of individuality to gain an unparalleled sense of universality and to strengthen our spiritual health which is required for the practice of Yoga. In our day-to-day personal and inter-personal social life, Yoga has given us multitudes of tools, concepts, attitudes and techniques through which we can attain inner contentment leading to happiness and spiritual realization while simultaneously creating harmony in all relationships. All psycho-social qualities essential for healthy inter-personal relationships are cultivated when we live a spiritual life of Yoga that is in tune with the eternal Dharma. These humane qualities include loving understanding, innate sensibility that sees other’s perspectives, compassion, empathy, respect, gratitude, fidelity and responsibility.

The Bhagavad Gita depicts very similar qualities of a spiritually healthy person in Chapter XVI. These include:

- fearlessness (Abhayam),
- purity of inner being (Sattva Samshuddhih),
- steadfastness in the path of knowledge (Jnanayoga Vyavasthitih),
- charity (Danam),
- self control (Dama),
- spirit of sacrifice (Yajna),
- self analysis (Svadyaya),
- disciplined life (Tapa),
- uprightness (Arjavam),
- non violence (Ahimsa),
- truthfulness (Satyam),
- freedom from anger (Akrodhah),
- spirit of renunciation (Tyagah),
- tranquillity (Shanti),
- aversion to defamation (Apaishunam),
- compassion to all living creatures (Daya Bhutesv),
- non-covetousness (Aloluptvam),
- gentleness (Maardavam),
- modesty (Hrih Acaapalam),

- vigour (Tejah),
- forgiveness (Kshama),
- fortitude (Dhritih),
- cleanliness of body and mind (Saucam),
- freedom from malice (Adroho), and
- absence of pride (Naa Timaanita).

One who is blessed with these qualities is indeed a divine blessing to the social life of their immediate family, friends, relatives and their society itself.

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## 1.8 ALTERING FROM INDIVIDUALITY TO UNIVERSALITY

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Yoga, which emphasizes the universal, is a perfect foil to those human activities, which glorify the personal. The ego which is fixated only on its own shallow self will soon run into the blank wall of depression and despair, overwhelmed by its own superficiality. That striving spirit which looks within at the universal aspect of its own nature and sees the oneness of the whole of creation will find an endless fountain of inspiration and joy. In short it may be safely said that the practice of Yoga as a unified whole helps the individual shift from an “I”-centric approach to a “we”-centric approach. Tirumoolar stresses the importance of cutting the ego sense (Anava Mala) in countless verses of the 3000 versed classic Tirumandiram. Yoga not only considers the importance of attaining a dynamic state physical health but also more importantly mental health. Qualities of a mentally healthy person (*Stitha Prajna*) are enumerated in the Bhagavad Gita as follows:

- Beyond passion, fear and anger (*veeta raga bhaya krodhah- II.56*)
- Devoid of possessiveness and egoism (*nirmamo nirahamkarah- II.7*)
- Firm in understanding and not bewildered (*sthira buddhir asammudhah- V.20*)
- Engaged in doing good to all creatures (*sarva bhutahiteratah- V.25*)
- Friendly and compassionate to all (*maitrah karuna eva ca- XII.13*)
- Pure hearted and skilful without expectation (*anapekshah sucir daksah- XII.16*)

Maharishi Patanjali tells us that we can gain superlative happiness, mental comfort, joy and satisfaction by practising and attaining a state of inner contentment (*santoshat anuttamah sukha labhah- Yoga Sutras II: 42*). This link is

quite apparent once we think about it, but not too many associate the need for contentment in their greed for anything and everything in this material world. The Bhagavad Gita says, *“yogaha karmasu koushalam”* meaning thereby that Yoga is skill in action (II.50). The real Yogi, immensely conscious and aware at the physical, mental and emotional levels gains great control through that consciousness over all aspects of life thus developing a real skill in living. Part of that skill springs from his cultivated detachment, his ability to work for “work’s sake,” and not for the sake of the reward. He realizes that his duty is to do his best but that the ultimate result is not in his hands. The Yogi performs the needed action not for the sake of the fruits of that action, but because it is good and necessary to do so. Such an attitude of mind produces consummate skill in whatever action the Yogi undertakes. Consummate concentration, consummate controls are all offshoots of good Yoga Sadhana. This belies the age-old belief that the competitive spirit produces the highest skill. To this the Yogic answer is: detachment from the fruits of the action produces the greatest efficiency, for one is then emotions connected with “goal-oriented”, competitive thinking. The beauty of Yoga is that these abstract principles become concrete in the daily practice of the techniques available in the Yoga system. Once the “Seed of Yoga” finds fertile soil, these concepts grow naturally, slowly but surely taking root in all aspects of life.

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### 1.9 ATTAINING HEALTH THROUGH YOGA

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Barely do we understand the significance of quiet at the psychological dimension, moderating of breath at Prana (life power) level and unwinding of gatherings of muscles at the body level and substantially less the experience of euphoria. When we begin understanding the job of each of the above-mentioned and begin utilizing them routinely the satisfaction in our life begins blooming. This is the thing that we call as advancement of positive well-being or preventive medicinal services. The positive well-being would now be able to be called merry well-being.

To achieve an all encompassing methodology by taking into account control in eating, resting, working, diversion, change in way of life, and so forth., receiving the accompanying four Karma Yoga standards will work out in preventive social insurance.

- 1) Work with a feeling of obligation.
- 2) Work without getting strongly joined (focussed consideration) to the work.
- 3) Never enable the tensions about the outcomes to meddle with your psyche amid the procedure of the activity.
- 4) Acknowledge disappointment and accomplishment with poise.

Further, following *sattvika diet* (will discuss in Yogic Diet chapter), performing *asanas* (stretching and relaxing the muscles), *Kriyas* (cleansing), *Pranayama* (Regulation of breath), *Dhyana* (meditation), Satisfaction examination and notional remedies for having offset with requirements and wants, playing out all activities in unwinding will go far in advancement of positive well-being. Yoga is the response for all encompassing methodology which works every which way taking into account physical, mental, passionate and otherworldly needs of the individual. 'Counteractive action is superior to fix', this notorious saying is kept just as an acknowledged adage in current Medicare conveyance framework. The financial limit for arrangements for war is as yet more noteworthy than Medicare or instructive spending plans in any nation. Yoga could assume an indispensable job in averting sicknesses and a happy personality. Luckily all fitness centers have begun including Yoga as a component of their timetable and many go just to get physical advantages from Yoga in these gyms, tragically disregarding the otherworldly advantages. Advancement of positive well-being is being sustained by numerous who would prefer not to be the casualties of current sicknesses. Yoga is assuming an imperative job in this perspective in the new thousand years. Present day living has created stresses and strains, mounting pressures and weights in regular day to day existence. Changes in the structure of the general public and the family, leaving little pad for a person's issues and disappointments, has been indicating unfavourable consequences for the general identity of the person. Wrong dietary propensities among city-people regularly deciding on efficient fatty, high-fat and shoddy nourishment; mechanical headways, for example, simple methods of transport and machines, which generally rule out physical exercise increment in smoking and liquor and medication consumption, all add to the medical issues both - mental and physical, influencing entire of the general public.

Since Yoga is getting to be prevalent in all pieces of the world. For the eager personality it gives comfort. For the wiped out, it is a help. For an individual it is simply the style of the day to keep oneself fit and lovely. Some utilize it for

creating memory, knowledge and imagination. With its multifold favourable circumstances it is turning into a piece of training. Masters use it to unfurl further layers of awareness in their turn towards flawlessness.

*“Health and happiness are your birthrights, Moksha is your goal. Reclaim your birthrights and attain your goal through Yoga”* said, Yogamaharishi Dr Swami Gitananda Giri. Living a happy and healthy life on all planes is possible through the unified practice of various aspects of Yoga especially when performed consciously and with awareness. Asanas help to develop strength, flexibility, will power, good health, and stability and thus when practised as a whole give a person a “stable and unified strong personality”. Pranayama helps us to control our emotions which are linked to breathing and the **Pranamaya Kosha** (the vital energy sheath or body). Slow, deep and rhythmic breathing helps to control stress and overcome emotional hang-ups. Dharana and Dhyana help us to focus our mind and dwell in it and thus help us to channel our creative energy in a holistic manner towards the right type of evolutionary activities. They help us to understand our self better and in the process become better humans in this social world. The true Yogic life involves a sustained struggle against past conditioning, an attempt to control one’s inner environment in order to focus inward. Yoga is isometric, pitting one part of the body against the other and the Yogi strives to be “more perfect today, than he/she was yesterday”. It is practically impossible for Yogic practices to harm the practitioner when they are performed in the proper manner. Yoga is not just performing some contortionist poses or huffing and puffing some Pranayama or sleeping our way through any so-called meditation. It is an integrated way of life in which awareness and consciousness play a great part in guiding our spiritual evolution through life in the social system itself and not in some remote cave in the mountains or hut in the forest. Yoga can be rightly said to be the science and art of right-use of body, emotions and mind.

*Tiruvalluvar says, “The loving ones live for the sake of others while the unloving live only for themselves”.*

Yogis have colossal love and sympathy for all creatures and wish harmony and satisfaction for themselves, however for every living being. They are not “individualists” looking for salvation for themselves however in actuality are “universalists” trying to live in the correct transformative way as well as could be expected and with consideration and worry for their kindred human brethren and those creatures living at all planes of presence.

This is well exemplified by Yogic prayers such as,

*"Om, loka samasta sukhino bhavanthu sarve janaha sukhino bhavanthu Om shanti, shanti, shanti Om".*

May we all become true Yogis as extolled by Yogeshwar Sri Krishna when he says, *"tasmad yogi bhavarjuna -become thou a Yogi, Oh Arjuna". Hari Om Tat Sat- May that be the reality!*

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*\* Please note that I have deliberately repeated some information about Asanas, Pranayamas, Dharana, Dhyana etc., as it was necessary for me to repeat them. I couldn't omit them considering the nature of various texts which requires revisitation..*

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### 1.10 OBSTACLES IN THE PATH OF YOGA

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The path of yoga can be long and hard, filled with obstacles, pitfalls, and detours. Luckily, yogic philosophy provides a roadside assistance program to aid you when you become stuck. The yogis who have travelled the path before us have left us a troubleshooting guide called the 13 obstacles of yoga. The nine main obstacles of yoga are:

1. **Vyadhi** - Illness, disease, physical or mental. It is difficult to do yoga if you are physically sick. Thus it is important to lead a healthy lifestyle for the prevention of illness and promotion of optimal health.
2. **Styana** - Apathy, disinclination towards performing ones **kartavya** or duty. By procrastinating, we avoid our practice and create excuses for not being on the path and doing the work.
3. **Sanshaya** - doubting ones capability or the result of yoga. We can only come to know Reality, declares the **Brihad-Aranyaka-Upanishad** (4.4.23), when we are free from doubt. It is important to cultivate faith in oneself as well as the yogic path.
4. **Pramada** - Heedlessness, carelessness, a lack of persistence. Yoga is both a science and art and approaching it without skill, care, respect and devotion will create erratic and possible negative results.
5. **Alasya** - Sloth, inertia of mind or body due to dominance of the tamasic element. Yoga requires discipline, zeal and tapas (will-power) to succeed on its path. Laziness will prevent you from attaining your highest potential.

6. **Avirati** - Overindulgence, attachment to pleasurable things. We must learn to “let go” of our attachments to desire and physical objects if we are to make progress in yoga.

7. **Bhrantidarshan** - False vision, a premature sense of certainty. The development of a false notion about the practice of yoga and its outcome can not only lead one off the path of yoga, but also create harm and disappointment.

8. **Alabdha-bhumikatva** - Non-attainment of the next yogic stage or accomplishment. This happens due to faulty or poor practice and creates a feeling of being “stuck” and leads to discouragement.

9. **Anawasthitatwa** - Instability, non-permanence of a yogic accomplishment or stage. Not able to maintain an attained stage can be a real drag. This again can be a result of faulty or poor practice.

When any of these primary obstacles are encountered, four minor obstacles may appear according to the circumstances:

1. **Duhkha** - Pain or sorrow 2. **Daurmanasya** - depression, pain caused by non-fulfilment of desires. 3. **Angamejayatwa** - the shivering of parts of the body. 4. **Shvasa-prashvasa** - disturbances in kumbhaka or breath retention causing the irregular breathing pattern that comes with mental agitation.

You will need to be able to remove all these obstacles at will to be successful in yoga. They may appear at any time, and if not conquered during their first appearance, they are most likely to return until you learn how to overcome them. The key to the removal of any and all of the above obstacles is the cultivation of the one-pointedness of mind. These obstacles will naturally pass with time unless we allow ourselves to become entangled and bogged down in them. By focusing all of your attention on a single object the obstacles dissolve and begin to lose their importance and power.

### **SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF YOGA**

Yoga will teach you that the goal of every individual's life should be to take the inner journey inside one's self. A perfect harmony between mind, body and soul can bring about a perfect balance. The practice will install optimism within you. Your focus will become better. Your clarity of seeing things will change. You will have courage to overcome any obstacles in life.

Pranayama starts with breathing practices and leads towards control of Prana or the life force. It involves developing awareness of one's breath followed by willful regulation of respiration. It establishes control over the mind.

Regular practice of asanas restores strength and stamina in the body. Asanas together with breath control rectify physical, physiological and psychological disorders.

Practising asanas cleanses and detoxifies the body by increasing the circulation of fresh blood through the body. Asanas tone the whole body and strengthen bones, muscles, corrects the posture, improves breathing and increases energy. Asanas help us learn how to adjust and arrange each part of our body. It teaches how to balance between both sides of the body when entering into an asana.

The aim is instead to let all body parts and organs work together as one.

Yoga encourages ourselves to let us go unnecessary desires, thereby learning to quieten and concentrate the mind. Increasing our ability to direct it, in ways that will give us greater control over our senses, thoughts, feelings, desires, impulses and habits. This control is not repressive and strict, but represents a more balanced and harmonious approach to life, one that can restore in us the sense of joy.

### **Some of the common misconceptions about Yoga:**

- Its not a religion, dogma, belief, cult
- Its not a magic or shamanism.
- Many assume Yoga is limited to postures. However, in the Yoga Sutras only three Sutras are dedicated to asanas. Subsequently, Hatha Yoga can be said to be a preparatory process so that the body can sustain higher levels of energy. The process begins with body, then the breath, the mind and finally the inner self. Yoga is just a Fitness Club exercise, that's what is the thinking of most gym goers. Yoga is much more than that. It is the integration of the mind, body and the spirit into one harmonious as whole. It strives for attaining inner peace and union with environment.
- Its not only a meditation. It takes a long time for a student to reach the desired point where he/she can finally achieve Dhyana (meditation).
- Yoga is not self mortification and self torture.
- Yoga has nothing to do with hypnotic or trance-like state, on the contrary, pursues a greater consciousness and higher than normal clear-headedness.



- One of the misunderstandings that Yoga practised in the west has generated is to believe in the existence of physical methods leading to spiritual realizations. This is preposterous, when Hindu texts speak of physique they are actually referring to something different. Exercises promoting an intensive concentration are indicated, they focus on function, organs, or particular areas of body in order to systematically expand one's consciousness by moving into the organic unconscious. The result is dematerialization and the shift onto a subtle plane of what is commonly called 'Coenesthesia'.
- Asanas are natural, pleasant and effortless body postures, this must be understood in relative sense. They become so once the subject gets used to them, which may take a long time. The important aspect of asanas is the employment of mudras as a ritualistic and magical one. Asanas are designed to promote an imperturbability in the entire body. Thus asanas have a relation to Tantric Yoga habit of identifying one's body with a body of a Devata (deity). The idea of asanas express inner meaning and a higher meaning that animates and magically supports a gesture of the body. This applies to Mudras also specifically. According to Tantra the practice of Yoga is strictly a Divya. Unification of mind requires unification of soul, it cannot be achieved unless the soul is calm and trouble-free. Such is a practical goal, lifestyle which are considered for moral rules in Yoga.
- Yoga does not mean that one has to be a celibate. Celibacy does not mean just to remain unmarried. It implies overcoming desires and temptations. Whether the person is sannyasin (celibate) or married, Yoga ultimately is meant to control and sublimate the senses and mind of the aspirant. Yoga helps one to lessen one's desires and minimise attachments towards pleasant objects.
- Many people assume that the belief in God is essential for the practice of Yoga. If I say yes, it is not going to remove your doubt about the belief in God. As regards to the belief in God, it is the very act of doing, and the art, is God. Hence, there is no scope for belief independent of action. We have the sight of God as we pray to Him or Her in Saguna\* form.

\* God, who is the treasure house of good, auspicious and divine qualities is considered as saguna. By worshipping such a God one's mind gets purified, since the consciousness imbibes such qualities.

Pregnant women should not do Yoga. The fact is that doctors themselves recommend Yoga is one of the best things women can do during pregnancy. However, the asanas and pranayama during pregnancy must be done under a supervision of an experienced Yoga teacher/master. For pregnant women there are some variations in asanas and pranayama.

Some people believe Yoga is not challenging enough and ranks low as cardiovascular workout. However, the method and intensity of yoga depends upon the purpose for which you are practising. Hence , there is prevalence of different styles of yoga schools.

For example Power Yoga is aerobic in nature and strength inducing. Executing asanas in an Ashtanga Yoga class requires coordination and flexibility. Similarly, high level of endurance, strength and conditioning is required in a Vinyasa Yoga class.

However, as explained earlier through various definitions, the true nature of Yoga is not so. It is a complete system or a way of life. Yoga being a way of life can be applied irrespective of age, gender, profession, religion or cultural background. It can be applied in every human endeavour.

*\* I felt a need to express and clear some doubts in the additional notes.*

### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- The practice of Yoga flourishes in almost every corner of the world today but not necessarily in the forms that might be expected.
- The meditation practices & spiritual disciplines practised today do not appear to look back to the ancient tradition of Dhyana.
- The asanas in the 'Light on Yoga' by B.K.S. Iyengar have similar set of asanas with different names as shown by Swami Vishnudevananda in the 'The complete illustrated book of Yoga' (he was student of Swami Sivananda) belonging to Dravidian Diksita family, custodians of Chidambaram temple. He supposedly inherited the family traditions.
- Swami Yogeshwarananda in his book 1970, 'First steps to higher Yoga' gives us 264 asanas.

- Legend speaks of 84,000 asanas, Patanjali, the traditionally accepted and oldest source of Yoga tradition, has none mentioned elaborately.
- Hathapradipika, the basic text on Hatha yoga has only 15 asanas.
- Sritattvanidhi manuscript in the Mysore Oriental Institute as 122 asanas, attributed to Mumtaz Ali Wodeyar (1794-1868).
- Yogacintamani, by Sivananda Saraswati states *pranayama evabh yasa kramena pratyahar adhar anadhyanasamadhi sabdenocyate* (pranayama, merely by increasing its practice intensity is called the name pratyahara, dharana, dhyana, samadhi).
- The *Vyayamasala*, literally means gymnasiums, are indigenous exercise arenas in the older cities of India run by ascetic orders and by the garadi or wrestler orders. These continue to be popular even today and represent a whole substrata of exercises. Vyayamasala's are places of exercise routines that are primarily aerobic in nature. Their exercise systems are based on muscular contraction & repetition, had military origins, its aim was development of musculature on morale limb in order to impel a weapon effectively beyond limits of the body.
- The very word asana, etymologically, means to sit, rest, to come to rest. It is formed from the verbal root *as* meaning to sit. But the word asana has been used for more promiscuously than this basic etymological sense. It is used to refer positions in archery & wrestling in India. It is generally used to, 'sit on a throne'. However, the word '*Prayatna*' in Patanjali's sutra seems to indicate something contrary to the idea of 'coming to rest'. Therefore the word may suggest a system of asanas which is more than sedentary meditation postures. Hatha Pradipika does refer to asanas that would not be used merely for meditation. The concept of asanas are the medium of exploration of conscious and unconscious mind (in modern times this sight is lost) we treat asanas as symbolic-magic complex under a pseudo-scientific garb.
- Only recently B.K.S. Iyengar in his works has reformed the asana system, he has re-ordered asanas considering the physiological nature of the movement in each asana individually and insisted on a principle of precision that is not found or cannot be determined in older yogic texts or even in the modern books of his contemporaries. His western students have gone even further with the concept of precision drawing on the

understanding of movement, muscle function & anatomy built up in the physiotherapy and functional anatomy schools of the west.

- Pattabhi Jois in Mysore claimed to teach the same asanas as B.K.S. Iyengar, but the systems are different. Iyengar thoroughly reformed the system. Pattabhi claimed that he and not Krishnamacharya was Iyengar's guru. Pattabhi Jois claims he learned from T. Krishnamacharya for 18 years and claims to teach the same asana system.
- Coincidentally the asanas similar to those that Iyengar teaches occur in the book by Swami Vishnudevananda. (We get an idea through this that there was great exchange of ideas and knowledge shared by each-other in those years).
- Pattabhi Jois published a book in Kannada language called, 'Yogamala', which lays emphasis on the Vinyasa style, quite different from Iyengar precision and prop style yoga. Critics always point out about the different styles adapted by both. But one has to understand that T. Krishnamacharya was master of precision as well as the Vinyasa. Iyengar had to initially use props due to his illness, and then he later claimed to cured off his illness due to the use of props and that's why he went on further to strengthen and reform the prop, precision and anatomical style of yoga. It could also mean that both adapted and did a slight reform in the styles in order to match their own physical capabilities.
- There are traces of wider and wider recognition of yogic practices in succeeding literary age, from the beginning of Vedic period. As early as Panini's time (500 BCE) 'Yogi meant a person who practised dharmic austerities; and these were much valued, and asceticism and vow of celibacy and life long study were regarded as great virtues and as being productive of the highest powers. Yoga was applied to the control of the senses'.
- Yoga doctrines appear in the second group of Upanishads. In its technical sense Yoga appears for the first time in the Taittiriya, Katha, Svetasvatara and Maitrayan Upanishads. In the Kena Upanishad it is stated that "The self cannot be known by him who has knowledge, but only by him who has no knowledge. Hence comes effort to subdue all the activity of the senses and the mind, to empty the intellect and thus to make it ready for a new apprehension."

*‘Strong body needs to be controlled by strong mind and strong soul as we do not want to produce brutes. The holistic science of Yoga is the best means for the integrated development of all the three facets of our personality’*

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